

Cabinet Statement

Statement on the Cabinet Meeting of Wednesday, 15 March 2023



ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENT



Electricity

Cabinet welcomed the launch of the Resource Mobilisation Fund (RMF) by the Minister of Electricity in The Presidency, Dr Kgosishtsho Ramokgopa. This collaboration between government and Business Unity South Africa seeks to provide resources and expertise to enable government to effectively implement the Energy Action Plan announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa in July 2022 and the 2023 State of the Nation Address (SoNA) as an example of effective social compacting and continued confidence in South Africa.

The RMF will boost the work of the National Energy Crisis Committee to achieve its goal of ending load-shedding in South Africa. Cabinet appealed to all stakeholders to contribute towards the implementation of the Energy Action Plan in order to tackle the heavy toll of load-shedding on the economy.

Cabinet noted the concerns raised recently by S&P Global Ratings that South Africa's economic growth was facing increasing pressure from infrastructure constraints, particularly severe electricity shortages. To address this challenge, government has since embarked on a series of decisive actions, which include fiscal consolidation, rapid economic reforms and urgent actions aimed at reducing load-shedding in the short term and transforming the sector through market reforms to achieve long-term energy security.

Cabinet also welcomed the opening of a bid window for a 513 megawatts (MW) of battery storage capacity as part of strengthening our response to the energy challenge. The closing date for the bid submissions is 5 July 2023 at 17:00 and all interested parties can complete the online electronic registration form available at: www.ipp-storage.co.za.

Cabinet also welcomed the decision by Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Ms Barbara Creecy, to grant Eskom an exemption from the lengthy process required to amend its Atmospheric Emission Licence. According to Eskom, this exemption will enable it to implement a temporary solution to the damage at Kusile Power Station by November 2023 and thus

allow the power station to resume generation capacity of 2 100 MW which will reduce South Africa's exposure to load-shedding by two levels.

National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU) strike

On the NEHAWU strike, Cabinet welcomed the signing of the Settlement Agreement at the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSC-BC) that settles the 2022/23 wage negotiations and ends the strike as well as brings all parties back to the Bargaining Council for the 2023/24 wage negotiations.

Cabinet further expressed its appreciation to those trade unions that remained in the PSCBC to continue with negotiations. It reiterated government's commitment to the bargaining process, and to working with all relevant partners to ensure that the primacy of collective bargaining is protected and respected.

We need to indicate that the principle of NO WORK, NO PAY will apply with immediate effect and the deductions will be done over the next four months, as part of the Settlement Agreement. The Department of Public Service and Administration will monitor the full implementation of these decisions.

In addition, law-enforcement agencies will follow up on criminal acts that were committed during the strike, whilst respective managers will attend to acts that violated the Code of Conduct for Public Servants.

National shutdown

Cabinet expressed concern over calls for protest action planned for Monday, 20 March 2023 and deems such calls as irresponsible and reckless.

The Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster is engaged with work to ensure that lawlessness is not tolerated.

The alleged demands about ending load-shedding, high cost of living and high unemployment rate were addressed by President Ramaphosa during the SoNA on 9 February 2023. Specific on ending load-shedding, the President has appointed a Minister of Electricity, Dr Ramokgopa, who is solely focused on ending load-shedding.

The implementation of the Five-Point Energy Action Plan is underway in earnest and the Minister of Electricity will in the coming weeks announce Eskom's performance targets towards ending load-shedding.

Equally, the President in his 2023 SoNA addressed measures put in place to address high levels of youth

unemployment and the cost of living. Therefore, the only demand which is the basis of this protest action is the plan to remove President Ramaphosa from office through unconstitutional means.

We want to inform all that REGIME CHANGE THROUGH UNCONSTITUTIONAL MEANS WILL NOT HAPPEN IN SOUTH AFRICA. Anyone with ambitions to govern this country must wait to contest the 2024 general elections.

Attempts to cause disruption and disturbances in the country will be met with the full might of the law. We must also clarify that no amount of political adventurism should sway any South Africans.

The Cabinet has also noted the hallucination of groupings claiming to have given Cabinet seven days to close schools.

The South African schools calendar for both public and private schools, which was gazetted in March 2022, already provides for 20 March 2023 as a special school holiday. It has always been clear that there are attempts to claim easy victories. Similarly, with schools' break in between a public holiday.

Presidential Youth Leadership Programme

Cabinet welcomed the launch of the Presidential Youth Leadership Programme by President Ramaphosa on 10 March 2023, at the Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha, which saw the establishment of a Pan-African fellowship programme.

This formed part of the inaugural session of the Nelson Mandela Youth Dialogue under the theme: "Ethical and intergenerational leadership for a better Africa". This intergenerational leadership platform strengthens existing continent-wide plans and agreements such as the African Union Agenda 2063, African Youth Charter and the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement.

Framework agreement to build cars in South Africa

Cabinet welcomed the news that car company Stellantis South Africa has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Industrial Development Corporation and the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition to develop a new vehicle manufacturing facility in South Africa. Stellantis sells Jeep, Alfa Romeo, Fiat, Citroën, Opel and Peugeot brands in South Africa.

South Africa-Tanzania relations

Cabinet welcomed the State Visit to South Africa

on Thursday, 16 March 2023 by President Samia Suluhu Hassan of the United Republic of Tanzania, at the invitation of her counterpart, President Ramaphosa. The visit follows the South Africa-Tanzania Ministerial Binational Commission (BNC) held in Pretoria on Wednesday, 15 March 2023. It will also crown the second session of the South Africa-Tanzania BNC, which comprises four committees: Political and Diplomatic; Defence and Security; Economic Affairs, and Social and Cultural Affairs.

In addition to its solidarity with South Africa's liberation struggle, Tanzania is one of the country's foremost trading partners, with total trade between the two nations increasing from R6.89 billion in 2021 to R8.71 billion in 2022. There are more than 250 South African companies in diverse sectors in Tanzania.

Merger of Heineken and Distell

Cabinet welcomed the approval by the Competition Tribunal of the international merger of European brewer Heineken and South African alcohol producer Distell Group Holdings.

The merger, which will create the largest cider manufacturer in the country, is subject to a range of public interest conditions, which include the promotion of supplier development, maintenance of local procurement, promotion of investment in research and development and increased local manufacturing capacity.

The merged entity will also promote worker ownership by establishing an employee share ownership plan and giving workers board representation.

2022 Floods Relief Progress Monitoring

Cabinet welcomed the work undertaken by the Minister of Human Settlements, Ms Mmamoloko Kubayi and Members of the Human Settlements MinMEC to monitor progress with the permanent resettlement and accommodation of families affected by the 2022 floods in KwaZulu-Natal as the country approaches the first anniversary of the 2022 floods devastation that befell our country.

Misrepresentations about the Benefits of Ministers and Deputy Ministers

Cabinet expressed concern over the continued misrepresentation of the Benefits of Ministers and Deputy

Ministers as covered in the Guide for Members of the Executive, which outlines the benefits, tools of trade and allowances for Members of the Executive to perform their duties efficiently.

Ministerial Housing arrangements are a result of the 1910 Consensus during the formation of the Union of South Africa with Pretoria as the Seat of Government, Bloemfontein as the Seat of the Judiciary, and Cape Town as the Seat of Parliament.

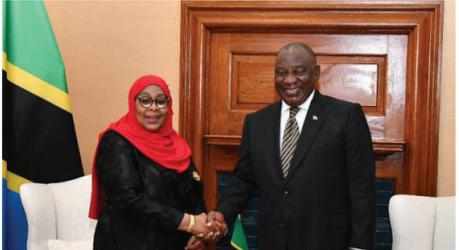
The houses that are claimed to be mansions were all acquired before 1994 and the successive African National Congress-led government has just ensured maintenance of those residences to preserve their value and thus benefiting from the appreciation of property values.

Vehicles used by Ministers and their Deputies are in line with the Ministerial Handbook and the value threshold is determined by the Minister of Finance in consultation with the Minister of Police on security features. The security features are an important element in the determination of the price threshold and recent unfortunate incidents of MECs losing their lives or being involved in serious car accidents emphasises the significance of the matter and should remove the matter from political opportunism.

Ministers and Deputy Ministers who use State-provided houses pay rent in a similar manner as parliamentarians do. It would be unfair to expect Ministers and Deputy Ministers who do not have job security in their current positions to provide their own accommodation whilst in the service of the nation.

All members of Parliament are entitled to support staff who assist them in the execution of their work. The differences in the number of support staff in the offices of Ministers is a result of the time a specific Minister was appointed, as all staff are linked to the terms of office of a specific Minister. This is due to the fact that the Ministerial Handbook is a living document that is reviewed continuously.

The President has referred the current Ministerial Handbook to the Independent Commission for the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers, which already deals with the remuneration of all public office bearers to review.



CABINET DECISIONS

Draft Policy on Women in Sport

Cabinet approved the gazetting of the draft Policy on Women in Sport for public comments. The policy outlines a set of measures that will promote and support women in sport and ensure programmes are in place to address gender disparities in sporting codes and structures.

It also addresses barriers to entry by women in sport such as lack of funding, sponsorship and inadequate remuneration. The proposed policy intends to promote increased active participation of women in sport and leadership roles such as coaching and officiating.

The policy recognises that increased participation of women in sport and leadership positions will drastically reduce and finally eradicate gender inequality and various forms of discrimination against women. It also seeks to promote equity and ensure women receive respect or recognition on the

professional front, including equal remuneration as their male counterparts.

Hosting of the International Maternal and Newborn Health Conference - 2023

Cabinet granted approval for South Africa to host the International Maternal and Newborn Health Conference in Cape Town from 8 to 11 May 2023, where more than 1 000 stakeholders from around the world will gather to accelerate solutions to improve maternal and new-born survival, and prevent stillbirths.

South Africa has made great progress towards achieving the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals targets for maternal and newborn health, and prevention of stillbirths. The country will also benefit immensely as conference delegates will share, among others, their effective strategies and innovations on maternal and newborn health issues.

Resistance and Liberation Heritage Route (RLHR) project

Cabinet received a detailed progress report on the implementation of the RLHR project. Cabinet also approved that the Ministers of International Relations and Cooperation and Justice and Correctional Services form part of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on the RLHR.

The RLHR is a national memory project aimed at commemorating and celebrating South Africa's road to freedom. Cabinet established the IMC to oversee this project and provide political leadership.

The project seeks to include various forms of memorialisation of the sacrifices freedom fighters made for South Africa to become free and democratic. It also allows for the construction of museums, monuments, libraries and archives, and aims to recognise the spirit of solidarity and cooperation amongst Africans. It has been endorsed by the

UN and has the potential to strengthen people-to-people cooperation using culture and heritage across the continent.

A number of activities that took place in 2022 included Ministerial visits to Botswana and Zimbabwe as well as planning meetings with Angola and Tanzania.

Activities around this project aim to connect all Southern African countries and educate young people about the struggle against colonialism and racism. The policy similarly makes allowance for the repatriation of the remains of South African liberation fighters who are buried in foreign countries. About 11 graves that are known to belong to South Africans have been identified in Zambia, including that of Struggle stalwart Mr Duma Nokwe.

National Policy on the Digitalisation of Arts, Culture and Heritage

Cabinet approved the National Policy on the Digitalisation of Arts, Culture and

Heritage for implementation. The policy gives further effect to the National Policy on the Digitisation of Heritage Resources that was developed by the then Department of Arts and Culture in 2011. The policy focuses on the digitisation of heritage resources for the purpose of preservation, access and management of ownership.

Although digitisation is a process of converting analogue content into digital content, including paper records, microfiche and non-digital tape recordings, the policy has extended this definition to born-digital resources such as information produced digitally, which may never be converted into physical form.

Digitisation will have immense benefits for the country as it will provide easy access to information resources, particularly those held by archives, libraries and museums. The policy will be implemented across government and society.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Human Rights Day

President Ramaphosa will deliver the keynote address at the 2023 Human Rights Day national event on Tuesday, 21 March 2023 at the De Aar West Stadium, in the Northern Cape.

The theme for this year is: "Consolidating and Sustaining Human Rights Culture Into The Future", as we commemorate the Sharpeville and Langa massacres, and other marches that took place on 21 March 1960 throughout the country.

As government, we remain committed to the constitutional responsibility of protecting the human rights of all people in the country. Let us work together to ensure that we leave no one behind in making the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 and the Bill of Rights a lived reality for all.



World Water Day

South Africa will mark National Water Week from 20 to 26 March 2023 under the theme: "Accelerating Change".

The week coincides with World Water Day on 22 March 2023, which highlights the importance of fresh water. Despite the recent heavy rains in parts of the country, South Africa remains a water-scarce country and ranks as one of the 30th driest countries in the world.

Cabinet called all citizens to protect

our precious water resources such as wetlands, as these are crucial for our long-term water security. We all have a role to play in saving water and ensuring that our supply does not run dry.

World Tuberculosis (TB) Day

Deputy President Paul Mashatile will deliver the keynote address during the official commemoration of World TB Day on 24 March 2023 under the theme: "Yes! You and I Can End TB".

The official event at the Thlabane Stadium in North West will also see the South African National AIDS Council and the Department of Health launching the National Strategic Plan on TB, HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections for 2023 to 2028. This builds on the significant progress achieved through renewed focus on prevention, treatment, uptake, coverage and adherence, and ending discrimination and stigmatisation.

BILL

Judicial Matters Amendment Bill of 2023

Cabinet approved the submission of the Judicial Matters Amendment Bill of 2023 to Parliament. The Bill aims to amend numerous Acts administered by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development by addressing technical issues and matters that affect the practical application of the Acts.

The Bill contains 37 clauses that propose amendments to correct the constitutional defects of the various Acts.

MESSAGES

Congratulations

Cabinet extended its congratulations and well-wishes to:

The Proteas who are currently hosting Proteas Indies for a multi-format tour. Cabinet calls on all South Africans to support the Proteas as they continue to fly our flag high.

Condolences

Cabinet expressed condolences to the family and friends of:

Free State Education MEC Tete Makgoe (60), who contributed immensely to the education sector and successfully led the Free State to attain the highest matric pass rate in four consecutive years.

Ms Maurencia Gillion, who represented the Western Cape in the National Council of Provinces, and served in the Select Committee on Health and Social

Services. She was a well-known activist and served the people of the Western Cape, especially in the rural parts of the province, for many years.

Mr John Wills (66), a renowned human rights lawyer and activist who represented a number of political leaders, including former President Nelson Mandela.

Mr Mark Pilgrim (54), a media personality who inspired and motivated many people in the media industry.

Ms Gloria Bosman (50), a multi-award winning South African jazz musician and composer.

Enquiries:
Mr Michael Currin
Acting Government Spokesperson
Mobile: 082 462 7896
www.gcis.gov.za | www.gov.za

